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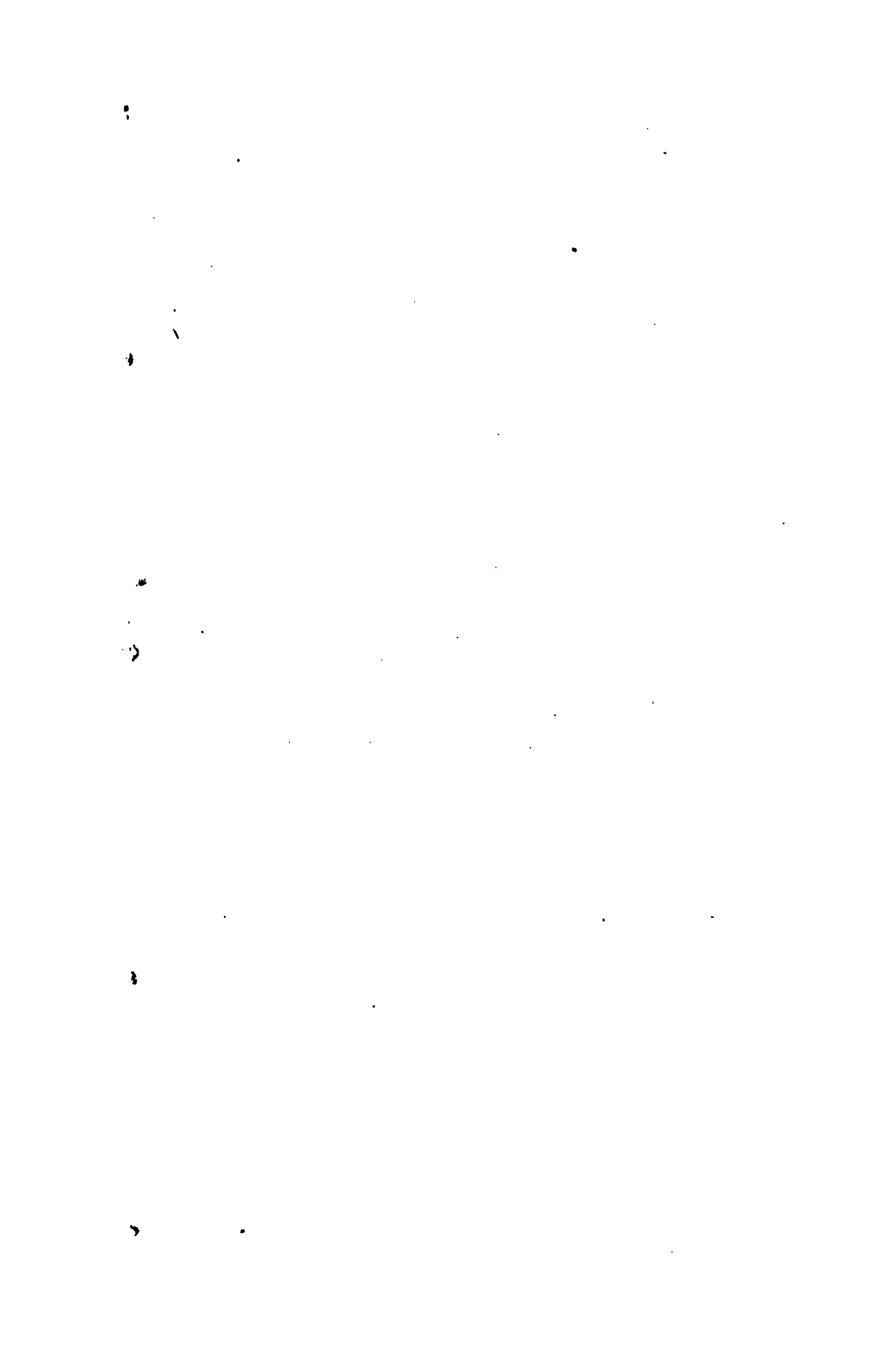
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**Andrew Benton**  
1620-1683



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# ANDREW BENTON

1620-1683

## A Sketch

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BY  
JOSIAH· HENRY BENTON, JR.



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PRIVATELY PRINTED  
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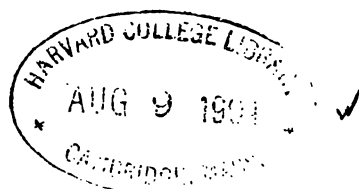
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*Two hundred and fifty copies printed*



Dr. J. A. Green  
Boston.

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**I***N the preparation of this sketch I have been aided by Mr. Charles Towneley Martin, of Hartford, Connecticut, who is also a descendant of Andrew Benton. Mr. Martin has freely allowed me to make use of material gathered by him, and has also personally examined all the original records to which I refer. The sketch is the first part of a book soon to be printed, giving an account of Andrew Benton and of his descendants in my own line of descent. I print it separately now, thinking it may be of interest to all his descendants.*

J. H. B., JR.

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# Andrew Benton

1620-1683

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**T**HE Bentons of New England are descended from Edward Benton and Andrew Benton, who came from England between 1630 and 1635. It is not now possible definitely to determine to what particular branch of the English family they belonged. That family was an ancient and honorable one, and was at one time quite numerous, especially in Wiltshire and in Essex. (*History of Rochford Hundred*, by Phillip Benton, pp. 394 *et seq.*)

There are six coats of arms beionging to the English Bentons, but as it is not yet possible to ascertain from which branch of the English family the Bentons of New England came, any of their descendants who covet a coat of arms must suit themselves at the risk of choosing a coat which they have no right to wear. I think, however, they may well be content to trace their lineage from Andrew and Edward Benton, plain yeomen from the English farms, who came to the new world to better their condition, and that they might own the land they tilled.

My earliest ancestor of whom I have as yet found any accurate information, is Andrew Benton, who was born in England in 1620, the year in which the *Mayflower* brought the Puritans to New England. His tombstone, still standing in the "Old Center Burying Ground" near the rear wall of the First Church in Hartford, Connecticut, and doubtless erected by his son Samuel, bears this inscription:—

ANDREW  
BENTON AGED  
63 YEARS  
HE DYED IVLY  
31 ANO 1683.

He probably came from England among those who settled first at Watertown in 1630, a portion of whom went to



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Wethersfield and Hartford, Connecticut, in 1634 and 1635, and some of them to Milford in 1639.

The Indian name of Milford was Wepowage. It was purchased of the Indians by a committee for the planters, February 12, 1639, for the consideration of "6 coats, 10 blankets, 1 kettle, 12 hatchets, 12 hoes, 2 dozen knives and a dozen small glasses" (mirrors). The original settlers or "planters" are said to have come mostly from the counties of Essex, Hereford, and York, England. A number of them came with the Eaton and Davenport Company, and were at New Haven in 1638, their pastor being the Rev. Peter Prudden from Edgton, Yorkshire. While they were at New Haven they decided to settle at Wepowage at the head of a small harbor on Long Island Sound about ten miles from New Haven. Mr. Prudden preached at that time at Wethersfield, adjoining New Haven, and when he went with his church company from New Haven a number of the settlers in Wethersfield went with him, and became members of the Milford Church, organized at New Haven, August 22, 1639. These settlers from Wethersfield, of whom Andrew Benton was probably one, were from Watertown, Massachusetts, and a part of Sir Richard Saltonstall's company from Essex, England. The planters went from New Haven by the devious Indian trail, driving their cattle and other domestic animals with them, while their scanty household effects, farming utensils, and materials for a common house were taken by water. They erected a common house at the head of the harbor, and a few huts for temporary occupation, and then, as they were without the jurisdiction of any established settlement, they made a government of their own. November 20, 1639, they agreed that the power to elect officers and to manage the common interests of the plantation should be in the church only, and also that they would "guide themselves in all their doings by the written Word of God till such time as a body of laws should be established." They also chose five magistrates, directed that they should hold courts once in six weeks, and agreed as to the payments to be made by each person for the public charges, and November 24, 1640, "with the common consent and general vote of the freemen the plantation was named Milford."

The first record of Andrew Benton is in the list of the original settlers in 1639, but he is not recorded among the "free planters," which shows that he was not then in church fellowship. The Milford planters declared this to be a necessary qualification to "act in the choyce of public officers for the carrying on of public affayrs in this plantation." In the original allotment of Milford lands made in 1639, and recorded in 1646, Andrew Benton received lot 64 containing three acres, and shown on the accompanying plan. The record is: "Andrew Benton hath three acres be it more or less being bounded with a highway on the East, with George Clark Sen<sup>r</sup> on the South with the comon on the West, and with Edward Riggs on the North." (*Milford Land Records*, Vol. I. p. 80.) These lots were laid out in narrow parallel strips on each side of Mill River and West End Brook, doubtless for convenience of access to water.

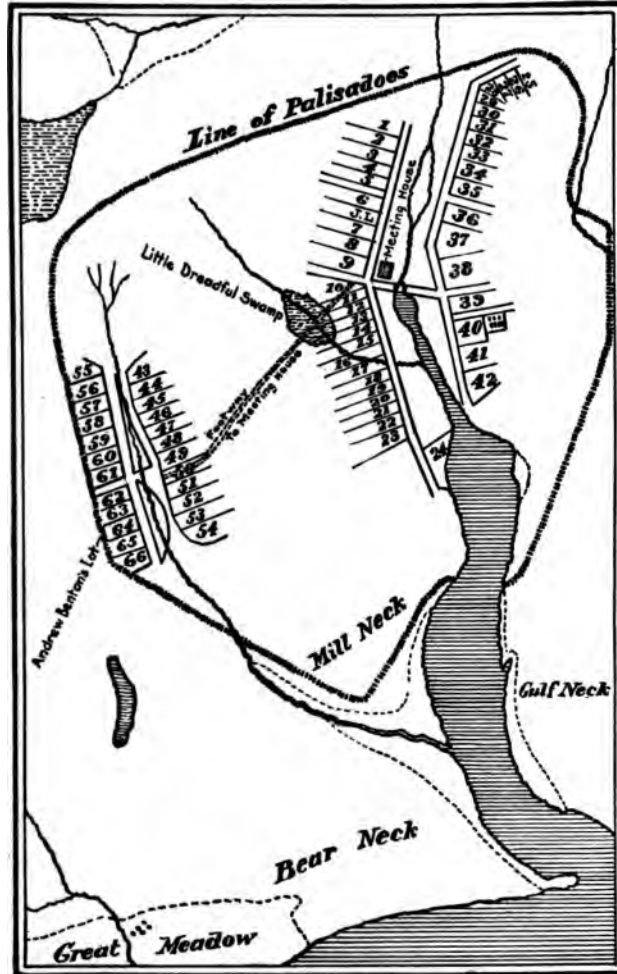
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By the original allotment each owner was required to build a good house on his lot within three years or it went back to the town, but this condition evidently was not strictly enforced. The houses of the settlers were not of logs, but were framed in the low lean-to style, and covered with split oak shingles. There were no division fences until 1645, by which time it is said most of the planters had built on their lots, though Andrew Benton may not have built until a year or two later.

All the lots were surrounded by "palisades" for common protection. These "palisades" were of the trunks of trees planted in the ground, and set so thickly that a man could not pass between them, making a fence ten or twelve feet in height, enclosing an area of nearly a mile square on both sides of the river. But for this the little settlement would probably have been destroyed at the time of the Indian combination against the white men in 1645 and 1646. At that time the settlers kept guard by sentinels every few rods along the whole line of "palisades" day and night. As early as March 10, 1640, the settlers organized themselves in military service, and provided that "every male above the age of 16 years, whether magistrates, ministers, or any other (though exempt from training, watching and warding) shall always be pro-

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[Herewith is given a plan of the original town plot of Milf



projected on a scale of three inches to a mile. The lot of And:  
Benton is number 64 on the plan at the left of the plate.]

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## A Sketch

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vided with and have in readiness, both a pound of powder and two pounds of bulletts or shott, and two fathoms of match for a matchlock, on penalty of 5s. a month for such default, in case ye amunition is to be had from ye town magazine." In 1645 the Indians set the country about Milford on fire, which did much damage to timber and meadows, although by strenuous exertions the settlers stopped the fire at the swamps on the West and North before it reached the "palisades."

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The Milford Church, organized at New Haven, August 22, 1639, was formed in the following manner:—Seven persons were first chosen, who joined in covenant to be the church, and were called "the seven pillars." Others were afterwards added and joined in the covenant, making the "visible saints" who were the church. In 1640 this church chose and ordained Rev. Peter Prudden as minister. The record of the ordination in the handwriting of Mr. Prudden is as follows: "At Milford, I, Peter Prudden was called to ye office of a Pastour in this church, and ordained at New Haven, by Zachariah Whitman, Williom Fowler, Edmund Tapp, designed by ye church for that work: Zach: Whitman being ye moderator for that meeting in a day of solemn humiliation, upon ye 3d Saturday in April, being I remember ye 18th day of ye month, 1640."

Whitman was the Ruling Elder, and Fowler and Cobb were the Deacons. Mr. Prudden had previously been ordained as a minister and had preached in England and in the Colony; but, following the primary principle of Congregationalism, that the minister derives his authority from the particular body of "visible saints" or church by which he is called, he was reordained by the Milford Church.

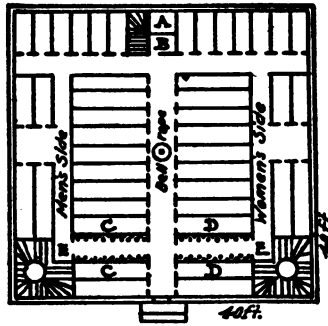
In 1641 a meeting-house forty feet square was erected, but was not completed for some years. The accompanying ground plan, showing the arrangement of seats, and a south view of it taken from Lambert's *History of New Haven Colony*, are interesting. It was doubtless in this house that Andrew Benton's children born in Milford were baptized. February 7, 1643, a footway was laid out to the meeting-house for the accommodation of the settlers on the west side as follows: "By

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[The following cut represents a view of the first Meeting-House from the south; and below is the ground plan of the same building]



The various letters represent (A) the pulpit; (B) deacons' seat; (C) guard seats; (D) guard seats on the women's side of the house; (E) gallery stairs. The dots show the place where the guns were set.



The bell-rope hung down in the middle aisle. These illustration are taken from Lambert's "History of New Haven Colony."]

the brethren and inhabitants of Milford it is agreed, that a footway to the meeting house shall be allowed, (and maintayned with convenient styles) from the West End. The stiles to be maintained by bro: Nicholas Camp at the West End, and by bro: Tho. Baker at the meeting house (for the outside stiles;) and for the inner fences, each man shall maintain his stile in the most convenient place: and the passage over Little Dreadful swamp in John Fletcher's lot, shall be by a long log hewed on the upper side." Andrew and Hannah Benton often travelled this footway, for their home was on the west side of the town, and Little Dreadful swamp lay between it and the meeting-house.

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In 1643 Milford became a part of the Colony of New Haven, but under the conditions contained in the following curious declaration in the *New Haven Colony Records*, Vol. I. p. 71:—

"A Generall Court held at New Haven the 23rd of October, 1643. Whereas this Plantation att first with generall ande full consent layde their foundations thatt none butt members of aproved Churches should be accounted free Burgesses, nor should any else have any vote in any Election, or power or trust in ordering of Civill affayres, in wch. way we have constantly proceeded hitherto in our whole Court wth. much comfortable fruite through God's Blessing. and whereas Stamforde, Guilforde, Yennicock (Southhold,) have upon ye same foundations and ingagements, Entered into Combination wth. vs.— This Court was now informed thatt of late there have beene some meetings and treatyes between some of Milforde ande Mr. Eaton about a Combination by which it appeareth thatt Milforde hath formerly taken in as free Burgesses, six Planters who are nott in Church ffellowship, wch. hath bred some difficulty in the passages of this treaty; butt att present it stands thus,— The Deputies for Milforde have offered in the name both of the Church ande Towne, First—thatt the present six free Burgesses who are nott Church members shall nott at any time hereafter be chosen either Deputies or into any Public trust for the Combination. Secondly, thatt they shall neither personally nor by Proxie vote att any time in the Election of Magistrates. Ande Thirdly, thatt none

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shall be admitted ffreemen or free Burgesses hereafter att Milford butt Church members, according to the practice of New Haven; Thus farr they granted, butt in two perticulars, the one and the said six ffreemen desire Liberty. First yt. the said six ffreemen being already admitted by them, may continue to act in all proper perticular towne business wherein the Combination is nott interested, ande Secondly thatt they may vote in the Election of Deputies to be sent to the Generall Courte for the Combination or Jurisdiction wch. soe to be chosen ande sent shall alwayes be Church members. The Premises being seriously considered by the whole Courte, the Brethren did express themselves as one man clearly ande full thatt in the foundation layde for Civill government they have attended their Lights, ande should have failed in their duty had they done otherwise ande professed themselves careful and resolved nott to shake the said Groundworks by any change for any respect—and Ordered that this their vnderstanding of their way and Resolution to maintain itt should be entred wth. their vote in this business as a Lasting Record. But not foreseeing any danger in yielding to Milford wth. the forementioned Cautions, itt was by Generall Consent and vote ordered thatt the Consociation proceed in a things according to the premises.”

As Andrew Benton was not admitted to the Milford Church until 1648, he was doubtless one of the six planters not in church fellowship, whose action was thus carefully guarded.

In a further division of lands in 1646, Andrew Benton received ten acres more of land (*Milford Land Records*, pp. 86, 97). In 1647 he sold, or rather exchanged, his original lot 64 for original lot 62. (*Id.*, p. 102.) Lot 64 is high land on the outer portion of the town and is still farm land. Lot 62 is at the southwest corner of the present Hill and Spring streets. The houses on Spring Street faced the east, and it is probable that Andrew Benton built his first house on lot 62. In 1648/9 he received more land, probably meadow, the record being: “Ord. that Andrew Benton shall have a piece of land for his last quarter division in the place where he propounded beyond the beaver pond.” (*Id.*, p. 21.) On May 14, 1649, it was ordered that “Andrew Benton is granted libert

to lay down his seed division and to take it up in another place where he desireth that is that which James Board laid down." (*Id.*, p. 23.) In another division in 1659/60 of meadow land the record is: "General Court, 19 March 1659/60. The number of acres that are to be laid out to each Inhabitant. Andrew Benton 8  $\frac{3}{4}$ ." (*Id.*, p. 54.)

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Andrew Benton married first Hannah Stocking, the youngest daughter of George Stocking of Hartford, who settled first in "The New Towne," now Cambridge, Massachusetts, and went from there to Hartford as one of the first settlers in 1636. The place and date of this marriage are not shown by any record, but it was probably in 1649, at Hartford, and after he had built a house in Milford either on his original lot 64 or original lot 62.

The original record of the First Church at Milford, now in the possession of Deacon George Clark of Milford, shows that Andrew Benton was admitted to the Church March 5, 1648, and that October 13, 1650, "the wife of Andrew Benton" was admitted.

George Stocking was an active member of the First Church and prominent among the early settlers of Hartford. I think Andrew Benton and Hannah Stocking must have become acquainted while Andrew was at Watertown, or possibly while he was at Wethersfield, only three miles from Hartford, and after Andrew had settled in Milford and built him a house he went to Hartford to marry the girl he had known before he went to Milford. The distance, about seventy-five miles, from Milford to Hartford, through what was then a wilderness, was such as probably to prevent any acquaintance between them being formed after he went to Milford and Hannah's father settled in Hartford. It is easy to see why no record of this marriage is to be found. The law then required all marriages to take place before some magistrate.\* It was not until October 11, 1694, that the General Court enacted that "This Court, for the satisfaction of such as are conscientiously desirous to be married by the ministers of their plantations doe grant the ordained ministers of the severall plan-

\* It is said that no marriage was solemnized by a minister in Massachusetts until 1686. (*Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings*, 1858-1860, p. 283.)



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tations in this Colony liberty to joyne in mariage such persons as are qualifed for the same according to law." (*Pub. Rec. Conn.*, Vol. III. p. 136.)

The marriage therefore could not have been solemnized by a minister, and the Hartford town records of that period are so incomplete as to show that marriages by magistrates were very frequently not recorded.

The original records of the First Church of Milford show that a son of Andrew Benton was baptized April 14, 1650. The record is as follows: "14 April 1650 John son of Andrew Benton, he died May following by his mother in y<sup>e</sup> bed in y<sup>e</sup> night." The first entry in the town record of births and deaths is October, 1653. No previous record can be found, and it is quite clear that this son John was the first child of Andrew and Hannah Benton. The church record also shows the baptism of three other children in Milford, the record being:—

"23 November 1651 Hannah daugh. of Andrew Benton."

"14 August 1653 Andrew son of Andrew Benton."

"15 April 1655 Mary daugh. of Andrew Benton."

From March, 1656, to July, 1660, the Milford Church was without a minister and there is no church record for that period.

The Milford town record, beginning October, 1653, shows the birth of three children, beginning with that of Mary, whom the church record shows to have been baptized April 15, 1655. That record is:—

"Mary Benton daughter of Andrew Benton of Milford was borne the fourteenth of April 1655. John Benton sone of Andrew Benton of Milford was borne y<sup>e</sup> 7 October 1656. Samuel Benton sone of Andrew Benton of Milford was borne y<sup>e</sup> 15 of August 1658."

The town records are complete and in good condition from 1658, and after July, 1660, the church records are also complete and in good condition, but neither of these records shows the birth or baptism of any child of Andrew Benton after that of Samuel, born August 15, 1658. The inventory of his estate, however, in December, 1683, shows that there were two other children of Andrew and Hannah Benton; a

son, Joseph, and a daughter, Dorothy. Joseph died August 12, 1753, and the inscription on his tombstone in Goodhill Cemetery, Kent, Connecticut, states that he was then in his ninety-third year, which shows his birth to have been about 1661. No record has yet been found of Dorothy except the statement in the inventory of her father's estate, in 1683, that she was then living and one of the children of his first wife. I think she was younger than Joseph, and that both of them were born in Hartford, and probably baptized in the First Church, the records of which at that period are lost.

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I think Andrew Benton went from Milford to Hartford as early as 1660. He was elected viewer of fences in Hartford, February 16, 1663, and reelected February 17, 1664. (*Hartford Town Votes*, pp. 119, 121.) He was a creditor in Hartford of Nathaniel Greensmith, who was executed for witchcraft at Hartford January 25, 1663, and the Court allowed payment of his debt February 4, 1664, the record being: "Feb: 4: 1664 To make a finall Issue of the payment of Nat. Greensmiths debts, the court allows out of Andrew Bentons Bill the Sum of fifteen pound & they viz: the Marshall, ensigne, & peck are to satisfy themselves for their paines there abouts out of this estate."

The Court record also shows that he served as a juror in Hartford, in June, 1664; and at a General Assembly of the Colony of Connecticut for Election at Hartford, May 11, 1665, he was admitted and sworn as a freeman. (*Pub. Rec. Conn.*, Vol. I. p. 19.)

The form of the "Freeman's Oath" was prescribed by law and stated the essential duties of good citizenship. It was as follows:—

## ¶ The Oath of a Freeman.

I, A. B. being by the P'vidence of God an Inhabitant w<sup>th</sup>in the Jurisdiction of Conectecott, doe acknowledge my-selfe to be subiecte to the Gouverment thereof, and doe sweare by the great and fearefull name of the euerliueing God, to be true and faythfull vnto the same, and doe submitt boath my p'son and estate thereunto, according to all the holsome lawes and orders that there are, or hereafter shall be there made, and established by lawfull authority, and that I will nether

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plott nor practice any euell ag<sup>t</sup> the same, nor consent to any that shall so doe, but will tymely discouer the same to lawfull authority there estalished; and that I will, as I am in duty bownd, mayntayne the honner of the same and of the lawfull magestratts thereof, p<sup>m</sup>oting the publicke good of yt, whilst I shall soe continue an Inhabitant there; and whensoever I shall giue my voate or suffrage touching any matter w<sup>ch</sup> concerns this Comon welth being cauled thereunto, will give yt as in my conscience I shall judge, may conduce to the best good of the same, w<sup>th</sup>out respect of p<sup>s</sup>ons or favor of any man. Soe helpe me God in o<sup>r</sup> Lord Jesus Christe.

Aprill the x<sup>th</sup>, 1640. (*Pub. Rec. Conn.*, Vol. I. p. 73.)

February 26, 1656, it was ordered that not less than two magistrates should give this oath at a duly warned public meeting. (*Id.*, p. 293.)

The church records of Milford show that Andrew Benton and his wife and children were dismissed to the Hartford church in March, 1666. The records are, under the head of "Admissions": "5 March, 1648, Andrew Benton." Following this in a different handwriting, "his wife & children dismissed to Hartford March 1666," and "13 October, 1650, the wife of Andrew Benton"; following this in a different handwriting, "dismissed to Hartford March 1666." At that time the church in Hartford was the original or First Church, organized at Watertown October 11, 1633, and it was to that church that Andrew and his wife and children were dismissed.

February 12, 1669, a part of the members of the First Church organized the Second Church of Hartford, and Andrew Benton and Hannah Benton were among the original members of the Second Church who signed the covenant at the time of its organization. In the records of the Second Church of Hartford, following the names of the original members there is a list of "members and children not in full communion," and in this list is the name of Hannah Benton, doubtless the daughter of Andrew Benton, who was baptized in Milford, November 23, 1651. She died before January, 1678, when another daughter of Andrew Benton, by Anne Cole, his second wife, was born and named Hannah.

The original records of the First Church of Hartford before 1685 are lost, and it is impossible to tell when Andrew and Hannah Benton were accepted as members of that church upon their dismissal from the Milford Church, but there is no doubt about their membership in the First Church. The town records show that in August, 1667, nearly three years before the organization of the Second Church, "the Town did desire and empower John Cole, Andrew Benton and William Edwards to correct any disorder that they shall discover in the time of public worship," and at a town meeting held February 23, 1668, "Robert Sanford and Andrew Benton chosen to be collectors for gathering of the minister's rates this year ensuing." (*Hartford Town Votes*, pp. 134, 138.) It also appears from the manuscript of Mr. Whiting, minister of the First Church who separated with a portion of the members and formed the Second Church in February, 1669, that Andrew Benton, John Cole, and two others of the church were called by Mr. Whiting, the minister, to be present with him November 22nd, 1666, "at Mr. Willys' house," when William Pitkin and others "came to speak" with Mr. Whiting and demanded full communion with the Hartford church on the ground of their English church membership. (*Hist. First Church, Hartford*, p. 200.) It is evident that Andrew Benton was prominent in the First Church from the time he went to Hartford. He stood steadily with Mr. Whiting, the associate minister, with George Stocking, his father-in-law, with John Cole, whose daughter he subsequently married as his second wife, and with the other members who opposed the methods of church government and management adopted by the minister, Mr. Stone. They regarded Mr. Stone's views and methods as opposed to the sound teachings of Thomas Hooker, pastor of the First Church from its organization in Watertown, in 1633, to his death at Hartford in 1647. The differences between these two parties in the First Church of Hartford continued during the entire period from about 1650 to 1669, and were known as the "Hartford Controversy." They divided the churches of Connecticut and the churches of New England. They caused the calling of a synod in Massachusetts which promulgated what was known as the "Half Way

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Covenant" of 1657 and produced the following extraordinary legislation by the General Court of Connecticut in 1658:

"This Court orders that henceforth no persons in this Jurisdiction shall in any way imbody themselves into Ch. estate without consent of the Generall Court & approbation of the neighbo' Ch.s. This Court orders that there shall bee no ministry or Ch. administration entertained or attended by the inhabitants of any plantation in this Collony distinct & separte from & in opposition to that wh<sup>ch</sup> is openly & publickly obserued & dispenced by the settled & approued Minister of the place, except it bee by approbation of the Gen'all Court & neighbo' Ch's," March 11, 1657/8. (*Pub. Rec. Conn.*, Vol. I. p. 311.)

As absence from public worship was then punished in court by a fine of five shillings for each offence (*Code 1650*, p. 23; *Pub. Rec. Conn.*, Vol. I. 522), this law practically compelled Andrew Benton and all who shared his views to worship with those from whom they differed in fundamental doctrine under penalty of a fine.

The real question at issue in the "Hartford Controversy" was whether the Congregationalism of Hooker and the Cambridge Platform, which recognized no authority except that of the members of each individual church, called "visible saints," should be superseded by a Congregationalism which recognized a power in the minister and in associations or synods outside of the churches to control the action of individual churches. Questions of baptism, of right to full communion by reason of church membership in other churches, of the powers of ruling elders, and countless other subordinate matters, entered into the discussion, but at bottom it was simply a contest between those who sought to restore a Presbyterian order of regulation of individual churches, and those who stood for the fundamental doctrine that Congregationalism rests upon the absolute independence of a company of "visible saints," or members of each particular church. Andrew Benton stood steadily with the minority in the First Church for the old doctrine, which was the vital principle of Congregationalism. It was only by their unflinching opposition to the majority that a reaction was stayed which would inevitably have resulted in the displacement of pure Congre-

gationalism by a form of church government that Hooker and his followers left England to escape. It is hardly too much to say that the sturdy minority of the First Church of Hartford saved New England Congregationalism from destruction.

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In January, 1677, Andrew Benton and Andrew Benton, Jr., each received a lot of ten and a half acres in the division of the undivided lands which were granted by a Committee of the Proprietors to "such of the Town of Hartford as they shall see in need of the same, and as they shall judge it may be advantageous," upon condition that the grantees should not sell the same until the lots were fenced and improved. February 17, 1669, he was chosen viewer of fences. (*Hartford Town Votes*, p. 140.) He appears to have had charge of the meeting-house, for the record shows that at a town meeting December 29, 1676, "the Town gave to Andrew Benton for sweeping the meetinghouse 3 pounds per annum;" September 10, 1677, he served as juror in Hartford.

No record has yet been found to show when Hannah Stocking, the first wife of Andrew Benton, died, but it was probably about 1670. Andrew Benton married Anne Cole as his second wife, and their first child, Ebenezer, was baptized January 4, 1673. There were three other children by this marriage,—Lydia, baptized February 13, 1675, Hannah, baptized January 26, 1678, and John, baptized May 30, 1680, who doubtless died in infancy, as he was not living at the distribution of his father's estate in September, 1683.

December 12, 1680, his lands in Hartford were recorded to Andrew Benton in the *Hartford Book of Distributions*, p. 284, as follows:—

"Land in Hartford, in Connecticut belonging to Andrew Benton & His heirs forever: One parcell of land on which his dwelling house now standeth which he bought of Capt<sup>a</sup> John Tallcott and John Allyn (Agents empowered by the General Court of Connecticut May 14 1668) Containing by estimation three roods be it more or less abutting on a highway leading to Wethersfield on the East, and on a highway leading to Farmington on the North, and towards the West, and on Thomas Hosmer his land South. More one parcell of upland which he bought of the sayd John Tallcott,

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John Allyn &c containing by estimation twenty acres be it more or less, and abutts on a highway West, and on Mr. Willys and Mr. Whittings land East, and on Mr. Richards land North, and on Samuel Moody his land South. These parcells of land were formerly Nath. Greensmiths and now sold to Andrew Benton, and recorded to him March 11th, 1671. More: one parcell of upland which was given him by George Stocking to be to him and his heirs that he hath by the sayd Stocking's daughter, containing by Estimation eight acres be it more or less, and now by exchange with Samuel Moody the sayd land doth abutt on a highway on the East, and on the North, and on Sam<sup>l</sup> Moody on the West and on land formerly Tho. Seldens, now Nath. Coles on the South."

The first of these parcels was at the junction of the roads leading to Wethersfield and Farmington on the west side of what was then known as Wethersfield Lane, and is now Wethersfield Avenue, and was the first lot below what is called "South Green." It was originally the homestead of Nathaniel Greensmith, who with his wife, Rebecca, was charged with having bewitched Anne Cole, and was convicted of witchcraft, and executed at Hartford, in January, 1662. After its purchase by Andrew Benton he lived there. His wife Hannah doubtless died in the house, and he and his second wife, Anne Cole, both died there. The house has been moved away, and only a portion of it is still standing, but the accompanying picture of a similar house built by Hosmer on the adjoining lot about the same time, doubtless shows the Benton house as it was when Andrew lived in it. The record of the Court as to the transfer of this place to Andrew Benton is as follows: "May 22nd, 1668, This Court empowers Mr. Sam<sup>l</sup> Willys Capt<sup>n</sup>. Tallcott and the Secretary to make a deed of sale to Andrew Benton of Nath: Greensmiths house and land which was seized for charge expended on s<sup>d</sup> Greensmith and sold to G: [Goodman] Benton." (*Pub. Rec. Conn.*, Vol. II. p. 91.) In the distribution of Andrew's estate in 1685, this lot with house and barn was sold to his son, Joseph, for eighty-five pounds, and he sold it to Samuel Kellogg, June 22, 1693.

The second parcel was on the east side of what is now







Washington Street, north of the junction of Webster Street. Four acres of this lot were probably given to Andrew, Jr., by his father when Andrew was married, about 1676, and he built and lived upon it. At the death of Andrew, Sr., the remaining sixteen acres were divided equally between his four sons, Andrew, Samuel, Joseph, and Ebenezer, at the valuation of seven pounds an acre, which gave Andrew with his home lot eight acres. Afterwards sixteen acres of this property passed into the ownership of Samuel, the son of Andrew, who gave it by will to his son Moses, in 1746. Most of this sixteen acres is now included in the grounds of the "Retreat for the Insane." The third parcel of upland was limited by the conveyance of it to the children of Andrew and Hannah Stocking, and was therefore not included in the inventory or distribution of Andrew's estate.

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Anne Cole, the second wife of Andrew Benton, was said to have been bewitched when a girl by Nathaniel Greensmith and Rebecca, his wife, in 1662. A full account of this matter was given in a letter by the Rev. John Whiting, pastor of the First Church, and afterwards of the Second Church, in Hartford, to Rev. Increase Mather, in 1682, published in *Mass. Hist. Coll.*, Series IV. Vol. VIII. pp. 466-469.

This letter was entitled "An account of a Remarkable passage of Divine providence that happened in Hartford in the yeare of our Lord 1662." The part of it relating to Anne Cole specially is as follows:—

"The subject was Anne Cole (the daughter of John Cole, a godly man among us, then next neighbour to the man and woman that afterward suffered for witchcraft,) who had for some time been afflicted and in some feares about her spirituall estate: . . . She hath been and is a person esteemed pious, behaving herselfe with a pleasant mixture of humility and faith under her heavy sufferings, professing (as she did sundry times) that she knew nothing of those things that were spoken by her, but that her tongue was improved to express what was never in her mind, which was matter of great affliction to her. Since the abatement of her sorrows she is joined to the church, and therein been a humble walker for many yeares. And since also married to a good man, hath

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borne him severall children, and in her constant way aproved herselfe truely godly to the charity of all observers:—:

“The matter is, That Anno. 1662. This Anne Cole (living in her father’s family) was taken with strange fitts, wherein she (or rather the Devill, as ’t is judg’d, making use of her lips) held a discourse for a considerable time. The generall purport of it was to this purpose, that a company of familiars of the evill one, (who were named in the discourse that passed from her) were contriving how to carry on their mischievous designes, against some and especially against her, mentioning sundry ways they would take to that end, As that they would afflict her body, spoile her name, hinder her marriage, &c., . . . And then after some time of unintelligible muttering, the discourse passed into a Dutch tone (a family of Dutch then living in the town) . . . Judicious M<sup>r</sup> Stone (who is now with God) being by, when the latter discourse passed, declared it in his thoughts impossible that one not familiarly acquainted with the Dutch (which Anne Cole had not at all been) should so exactly imitate the Dutch tone in the pronounciation of English:—Sundry times such kind of discourse was uttered by her, which was very awefull and amazing to the hearers: M<sup>r</sup> Sam<sup>l</sup> Hooker was present the first time, and M<sup>r</sup> Joseph Haines, who wrote what was said, so did the Relator also, when he came into the house, some time after the discourse began.—Extreamely violent bodily motions she many times had, even to the hazard of her life in the apprehensions of those that saw them: And very often great disturbance was giuen in the publick worship of God by her and two other women who had also strange fitts. Once in speciall, on a day of prayer kept on that account, the motion and noise of the afflicted was so terrible, that a godly person fainted under the appearance of it:—The consequent was, That one of the persons presented as actiue in the forementioned discourse (A lewd, ignorant, considerably aged woman) being a prisoner upon suspition of witchcraft, the court sent for M<sup>r</sup> Haines and myselfe to read what we had written; which when Mr Haines had done (the prisoner being present) she forthwith and freely confessed those things to be true, that she (and other persons named

in the discourse) had familiarity with the devill. &c. . . .

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"This with the concurrent evidence, brought the woman and her husband to their death as the devill's familiars, and most of the other persons mentioned in the discourse made their escape into another part of the Country. After this execution of some and escape of others, the good woman had abatement of her sorrows, which had continued sundry yeares, and she yet remains maintaining her integrity, walking therein with much humble comfort, after her so sore and amazing affliction:: The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

"Rev<sup>d</sup> and deare Sir, — I had thoughts of sending the precedent account before now, but I could not (nor yet can) find my papers wherein I wrote what came from Anne Cole in her fitts. However I have gathered up the maine sum, and now send it: if you think fitt to insert the whole or any thing of it, not varying the substance, it is left with you."

A condensed account of this case is given by Increase Mather in his "Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences," Ch. 5. Another account is also found in "A Case of Witchcraft in Hartford," by C. J. Hoadley, in the *Connecticut Magazine*, November, 1899.

Andrew Benton was evidently respected and trusted. The following curious provision relating to him is found in the will of Joseph Nash of Hartford, made January 17, 1675. After appointing his brother executor the testator provided: "Also I doe desire & appoynt my Good friends Robert Webster & Andrew Benton to be the overseers of this my will desiring them to be helpfull to my wife & daughter with their counsell as they may have need—as also in deviding the estate & otherwise as there be occasion & appoynt this to be last will &c." (*Prob. Rec. Hartford*, Bk. 4, p. 7.)

It is evident that Andrew Benton was a man strong in body and in mind, tenacious for what he believed to be right, industrious, thrifty, and honest. He began life as a poor emigrant boy in the rugged wilderness of New England. He reared a large family, performed well his duties in town and church, and left his children a moderate but comfortable estate, and the heritage of a good name. He died July 31, 1683, at Hartford,

## Andrew Benton

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leaving no will, and September 4, 1683, an inventory of his estate, amounting to £345 17s. 9d., was taken by James Steele, Sr., and John Merrill.\*

The original inventory is now on file in the Probate Court at Hartford, and is as follows: —

¶ *An Inventory of the estate of Andrew Benton Sene' desesed taken the 4th of September: 1683: by us.*

Imp. his Aparill woolin lining hattes &c	003	13	06
on: beed and bedstede withe firnitur belonging to it:	006	10	00
In: 7 pair of sheets and on od sheet	002	07	00
In 7 pilow Coats 18s tabel lining 36s 6d	002	14	06
on Cradel rug and blankett: 5s two chests			
10s 2 ts fether pilows: 5s	001	00	00
3 great chairs: 9s: on muskett 20s: 6: Cushens: 9s:	001	04	00
Beeding in the littell rum 30s: 30 yards of tow cloth 3lb	004	10	00
on sword and 2 pair of bandlers: 5s: 3 spinning wheels and a reel 9s	000	14	00
on wormin pane 3s on tube and soop in it 4s: too yarn 12	000	19	00
In 9lb of twere yarn: 18s in 4lb 1/2 of Cotten yarne 13s: 6:	001	11	06
naills 5s on trundel bed and bed stede: 20s: 3 chairs: 4s:	001	09	00
In bras: 4lb two Ioyrn potts 30s: on Ioyrn keetel: 5s	005	15	00
I pautter: 35s teene pans 3s: erthen ware 6s: 6d: a our glas 12d	002	05	06
wooden ware 6s: spoons: 2s: on Candelseek 12d: two seues 2s	000	11	00
on pair of stillyards: 20s: two tramells tongs slic and greed Ioyrn 6s:	000	16	00
on tabel form: and meel chest 5s: 3 old bags: 3s	000	08	00

\* *The average estate of that period in the Colony as shown by the inventories was about two hundred and fifty pounds.*

## A Sketch

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books 20s: 4 agers: 3 chesels on squar on sheff on hame and pair pinchers 13s.	001	13	00	ANDREW BENTON 1620
two narow axes 4s: on beetell and 2 weges: 8s:	000	08	00	
barells tubs and pailles: 28s on chees pres: and a bradall 31s	001	11	00	
on wooden beetell: 1s: on grinding stone 1s: 2 pair of shers: 1s	000	03	00	
yarn and flax in the chambers: 30s on beed: 3 old blanketts on rug and on Coverlett and boulster all: 50s	004	00	00	
2 two new hors Colers on Cart roop: on hors halter	000	16	00	
on pair of crosgrners for a dor: 15d: on old pilian: and cloth 2s: 6d.	000	03	09	
Chest and oatts 20s: two Corn sives: 18d lumber in the chamber 5s	000	16	06	
about 90 bushels of mislin and rye about 30 bushels of Indan:	018	05	00	
In chees and meet and sault 3lb an a great shovell 18d	003	01	06	
In Cartt and plow and plow Ioyerns and chains all	004	10	00	
Iron friing pans: and a half bushell 3s on cuting knif 5.	000	08	00	
In housing and homlott 85lb in 16 acers of upland by m <sup>r</sup> Richards great Lotts 112lb	197	00	00	
In 8 acers of Land within the fenc in the great swamp:	020	00	00	
In 10: or 12 acers at fower mile hill	004	00	00	
In about twenty Sheep and Lams	008	00	00	
In Swin: 4lb in two old marrs 2lb	006	00	00	
In two oxen 5 cowes two Calfs 3 yong Cat- tel: all	037	00	00	
In sith forks hows and other utensells for husbandry &c	001	00	00	
	345	03	09	

# Andrew Benton

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James Steele Sen<sup>or</sup>

John Merrill

The Corne in the barne and on the ground we have not  
prisd: which as we are informd is about two acers of Sumer  
wheet: 8 acers of mislin on acer of barly on acer of oats: and  
3 acers of Indan Corne

debts due to the estate

debts due from ye estate

21 pound of Sheeps wool:

28s Iron cro:

000 14 00

two gunns that were not at home  
child<sup>m</sup> Andrew Samuell and Joseph: the  
daughters: Marry and doray by his first  
wif: by his secont wif Ebenesar: 9 or ten  
yers old Leda about 7 ars old hana 5

6 19 9

11 3 10

[On a separate scrap of paper not copied in the records:]

dets due from the estate

<sup>r</sup><sub>m</sub> ellieson

<sup>r</sup><sub>m</sub> Phenias

<sup>r</sup><sub>m</sub> William

John

Jonathan

<sup>r</sup><sub>m</sub> gardner

Way 04 02 00

Wilson 02 16 01

gibbins 00 12 00

ballew 00 03 03

bull 00 10 06

03 00 00

11 03 10

dets due to the estate

goodman barns of farminton

John Wiord of Wethersfild

du frome the estate }

of ieremyah addoms }

<sup>r</sup><sub>m</sub> Cro

due from the toune

Richard Smith buther

du from the estate of gorg Stoking

01 04 00

00 15 00

01 04 00

00 11 00

01 10 00

01 02 00

0 13 09

6 19 9

11 3 10

6 19 9

4 4 1

At a special court held December 18th, 1683, "The Inventory of Andrew Benton was exhibited in court & the court Grant Administration on the estate to Joseph Benton, & distributed the estate as followeth to the widdow forty pounds of the personall estate to be at her disspos(e) forever & a 3<sup>d</sup> of the real estate dureing her naturall Life & to Andr(ew) his eldest son besides what he hath received all ready fifty-fower pounds to Samuel Thirty fower pounds to Joseph Thirty fower pounds to Mary Thirty Three pounds to Dorathy Thirty Three pounds to Ebenezer because of his Impotency forty Nine pounds to Lidia Thirty Three pounds to Hannah Thirty Three pounds the sons to have their portion at twenty-one yeares of age the daughters to have their portion at eighteen yeares of age, & If any dy before they be of age his or their portion is to be divided amongst the survivors the Land to be divided amongst the sons part at present the rest in reversion after their mothers decease & Steven Hosmore & John Morrice are appoynted to be overseers to the children and estate & to distribute it to the Legatees, according to this distribution, & If the estate fall short it is to be born by the Legatees proportionally & If their be any addition it is to be divided according to this proportion. (*Probate Rec.*, Bk. 4, p. 77.)

ANDREW  
BENTON  
1620

## ¶ The Distribution of Good—— Bentons estate

His wife be cd according to y<sup>e</sup> court order was to  
be

	40 00 00
pd her 3 cows & 4 sheep	11 18 00
a bed bedstead & furnitur	6 10 00
an Iron kettle & pan	00 08 00
3 brass kettles & a skylyt	02 19 00
an iron pott & tramell	01 05 00
frying pan & ½ bushell	00 03 00
2 chayrs	00 04 04
cloath yarn & flax	06 08 02
for weaving	00 08 00
sope & tub	00 04 00
wheells reell & sieves	00 11 00
tongues slice & gridiron	00 03 00



ANDREW	an hour glass & fire pan	00	02	06
BENTON	earthen ware	00	05	00
1620	bellows barrells tubs & payls	00	18	06
	a candle stick table & meat trough	00	06	00
	a bason poringer & spoons	00	06	09
	bookes & wooden bowles	00	10	00
	pillows & blankets	00	13	00
	3 cushens 2 pillow coats	00	11	06
	towells sheets & table cloathes	00	14	00
	a batement for debts	02	10	00
	to be payd By Joseph in corn	02	01	03
		40	00	00
	Andrew Benton cd	54	00	00
	pd him by a cow	03	13	00
	by a third part of y <sup>e</sup> teem	05	15	06
	by 6 sheep	02	08	00
	a bible	00	05	00
	by an axe augers hamer &c	00	12	00
	sheep sheares & a shovell	00	02	06
	cheeses & salt	00	07	06
	a tub & payll	00	07	06
	by w <sup>e</sup> was pd to m <sup>e</sup> way for him	02	03	10
	a hog & 2 pigs	02	03	00
	a how & fork &c	00	06	00
	4 acres of upland	28	00	00
	a bate ment for debts &c	07	08	00
	to pay by Joseph	00	08	02
		54	00	00
	Sam <sup>l</sup> Benton cd	34	00	00
	pd him by a gun chayr &c	01	00	00
	a bible cheeses barrells &c	01	00	03
	nayls & a fork	00	07	00
	4 acres of land in y <sup>e</sup> upland	28	00	00
	his abate ment for debts &c	04	12	10
		35	00	01

# A Sketch

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he is to pay 20<sup>d</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> debts.

Mary Benton cd

33 00 00

ANDREW  
BENTON  
1620

pd her by a bed & furniture

01 14 00

by a heifer

03 00 00

pewter & tin ware

00 15 00

a brass kettle & skiner

00 18 00

earthen ware & box iron

00 06 06

a chayr & cushin

00 02 10

table linnen & pillow beers

01 00 09

sheets & towells

01 00 00

10 pd 1/2 of sheeps wooll

00 14 00

a chest botls & chopping knife

00 07 00

5 sheep

02 00 00

a chees pres & cradle

00 03 00

a tramell & beding

00 14 00

a cow & Bull

05 13 00

a gun sword hay cutter &c

01 14 06

a carpitt & bees wax

01 00 00

abatement for debts &c

04 10 07

by a third part of y<sup>e</sup> teem

05 15 06

by an iron crow

00 14 00

by Joseph Benton

01 00 04

33 00 00

Dorittee Benton cd

33 00 00

pd her by a heifer

02 00 00

by a trundle bed & bed stead

01 00 00

in pewter & wooden ware

01 00 00

a kittle pot & skylit

00 17 00

a chest & a chayr

00 09 10

tabel linnen & pillow biers

01 01 09

sheets & towells

01 00 00

10 yd<sup>a</sup> tow cloath

01 00 00

10 pd 1/2 sheeps wooll

00 14 00

churn & pillion

00 04 00

a rug botle & cetera

00 17 08

ANDREW BENTON 1620 }	6 sheep	02 08 00
	a glas & Bed rug	00 12 00
	2 calves & 2 pigs	01 17 00
	a pr stilyards Bettle wedges	00 16 06
	oats & cheeses	00 16 00
	sugar hops oatmell tunell	01 04 02
	abatment for debts &c	04 10 00
	by a third part of y <sup>e</sup> teem	05 15 06
	by Joseph Benton	04 15 07
		<u>33 00 00</u>
	Ebenezer Benton cd	<u>49 00 00</u>
	pd by 4 acres of land in y <sup>e</sup> upland by Mr Richards	28 00 00
	by 10 acres $\frac{1}{2}$ land at five mile hill	04 00 00
	by his fathers cloaths	03 11 00
	by 2 pigs & cetera	00 19 00
	by abatment	06 13 10
	by Joseph Benton	05 16 02
		<u>49 00 00</u>
	Lydia Benton cd	<u>33 00 00</u>
	her abatment is	04 10 07
	to be pd by Joseph Benton	28 09 05
		<u>33 00 00</u>
	Hannah Benton cd	<u>33 00 00</u>
	Her proportion of a batement	04 10 07
	to be pd by Joseph Benton	28 09 05
		<u>33 00 00</u>
	Joseph Benton Dt to y <sup>e</sup> estate for y <sup>e</sup> house Barn & home lot :	85 00 00
	by his proportion of a batement	04 12 00
	by 4 acres in y <sup>e</sup> uplands	28 00 00
	by a gun & axe	00 12 00

## A Sketch

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a bottle & salt	00	03	06	ANDREW
a hog	01	10	00	BENTON
				1620
	119	18	04	
Joseph is cred his share	34	00	00	
by what he payeth t good Benton	02	01	03	
to andrew Benton	00	08	02	
to mary Benton	01	00	04	
to dorrty Benton	04	15	01	
to Ebenezer Benton	05	16	02	
to lydia Benton	28	09	05	
to Hannah Benton	28	09	05	
	104	19	10	
Joseph is to pay in debts	014	19	06	
	119	18	04	

The widdow Benton hath for her thirds in y<sup>e</sup> homestead as was agreed half y<sup>e</sup> hous viz: y<sup>e</sup> south end & y<sup>e</sup> small room & half y<sup>e</sup> seller and y<sup>e</sup> use of y<sup>e</sup> well & half y<sup>e</sup> orchard & half y<sup>e</sup> garden next to it & one quarter of y<sup>e</sup> Barn & yard room for her cows & for woods it was agreed y<sup>t</sup> she should have y<sup>e</sup> use of Ebenezers Land also while he was of age

Distributed By us

Stephen Hosmer  
John Merritt

A County Court held at Hartford March 5, 1684/5:

"The distribution of the estat of Andrew Benton was exhibited in court & approved." (*Prob. Rec.*, Bk. 4, p. 102.)

Ann (Cole) Benton, widow of Andrew, died April 4, 1686, leaving a will, as follows:—

"The last will of Ane Benton made the twenty sixe day of march one thousand sixe hundred and eighty sixe being in sound mind and perfete memory and not knowing the day of my death doe Commit my Soule into the hands of my redeemer and my body to a Comly buryell I doe dispose of that estate god has betruisted me with as follows I give to my Son

ANDREW  
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1620

Ebenezer what of my estate if not hereafter excepted if he lives to nede it y<sup>nd</sup> my will is that my dafter Lydia shod have my litell brase ketell and my dafter Hanah should have my litell Iron pote and all my wareing aparell except won arporne which I give to my Son Ebenezer. all the rest both linen and wollen shod be devided betwene my dafter Lydia and hanah equeilly and allso my powder to be devided betwene them and my two skilletts I give y<sup>m</sup> I give Lydia 1 fine pillebere and 1 paire of sheats and 1 paire of coten pilleberes and to my dafter Hanah 1 paire sheats and the best of the coten pilleberes also Lydia must be paid the three pounds or what I tooke up in my husbands aparell out of the household stuf and all these legeseyes to be paid them the Son at twentyone yeares and the dafeters at eightene years of age and if any of them die before thay ataine such age then that part or parts to be to the Surviſer and I desire my loving brother Nathaneill Colle to be my executer to this my Last will and testament and in witness here of I have set to my hand y<sup>e</sup> yeare and day above writen in presants:

of John willson  
mathew grant

The  
marke x of  
Ane Benton"

(*Hartford Probate Records*, Bk. 4, pp. 236, 237.)

An inventory of her estate was taken May 14, 1686, as follows:—

¶ *An Inventory of y<sup>e</sup> estate off widdow Ane Benton deceased aprill 19:86 taken may 14:86*

3 coats & a west coat	02 10 00
an apron & hatt	00 12 00
a coat & west coat	00 05 00
6 handkerchiefs 3 aprons	01 10 00
6 caps & a handkercheif	00 14 00
stockings & apron	00 14 00
shifts & gloves	00 14 06
aprons & handkercheifs	00 07 00
Linnen & silk	00 13 00
	<hr/>
	07 19 06

# A Sketch

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a box & chest	00	14	00	ANDREW
some of her husbands apparrell	01	17	00	BENTON
childrens Blankets	00	12	00	1620
pillow Beers & linnen	01	01	00	
4 p <sup>r</sup> of sheets	02	10	00	
pillow Beers & table cloth	00	15	06	
towells & Napkins	00	15	00	
4 y <sup>ds</sup> & 1/2 cloath	00	14	00	
6 y <sup>ds</sup> serg	02	08	00	
pins & buttons	00	04	00	
lace & galloom	00	06	00	
linnen cloath	00	10	00	
a silver spoon & bodkin	00	07	00	
powder	00	15	00	
tin & wooden ware	00	10	06	
kettles & pots	03	10	00	
a warming & frying pan	00	10	00	
pot hooks & tongues	00	02	00	
a chest & earthen ware	00	10	00	
tow & wooll	00	13	00	
feathers & sheeps wooll	01	04	00	
cushins & pillows	00	09	06	
cards & candle stick	00	04	00	
6 blankets	02	01	00	
flax & seives wheels	01	00	00	
a chayer & half bushell	00	04	00	
Bibles & bookes	00	15	00	
yarn	00	15	00	
	25	16	06	
a Bed & Bedstead & curtains	03	08	00	
a tub & kneeding trough	00	04	06	
a Table & form	00	03	06	
a churn & tunnell	00	03	00	
tubs & Barrels	00	08	06	
chees moats & Table	00	04	00	
salt & Barks	00	06	00	
mault & flax	00	09	00	

ANDREW	Behives & Tramell	00	09	00
BENTON	pork & Suitt	01	13	00
1620	cheeses & a cheyer	00	06	00
	coverlids pillows	01	17	00
	a box & pewter	00	15	06
	2 skylits	00	09	00
	pillow Beers & Napkins	00	06	06
		11	02	06
	2 cowes	08	00	00
	6 sheep & 3 lams	04	00	00
	a sow	00	14	00
	4 hogs	03	00	00
		15	14	00
	Tottall	60	12	06

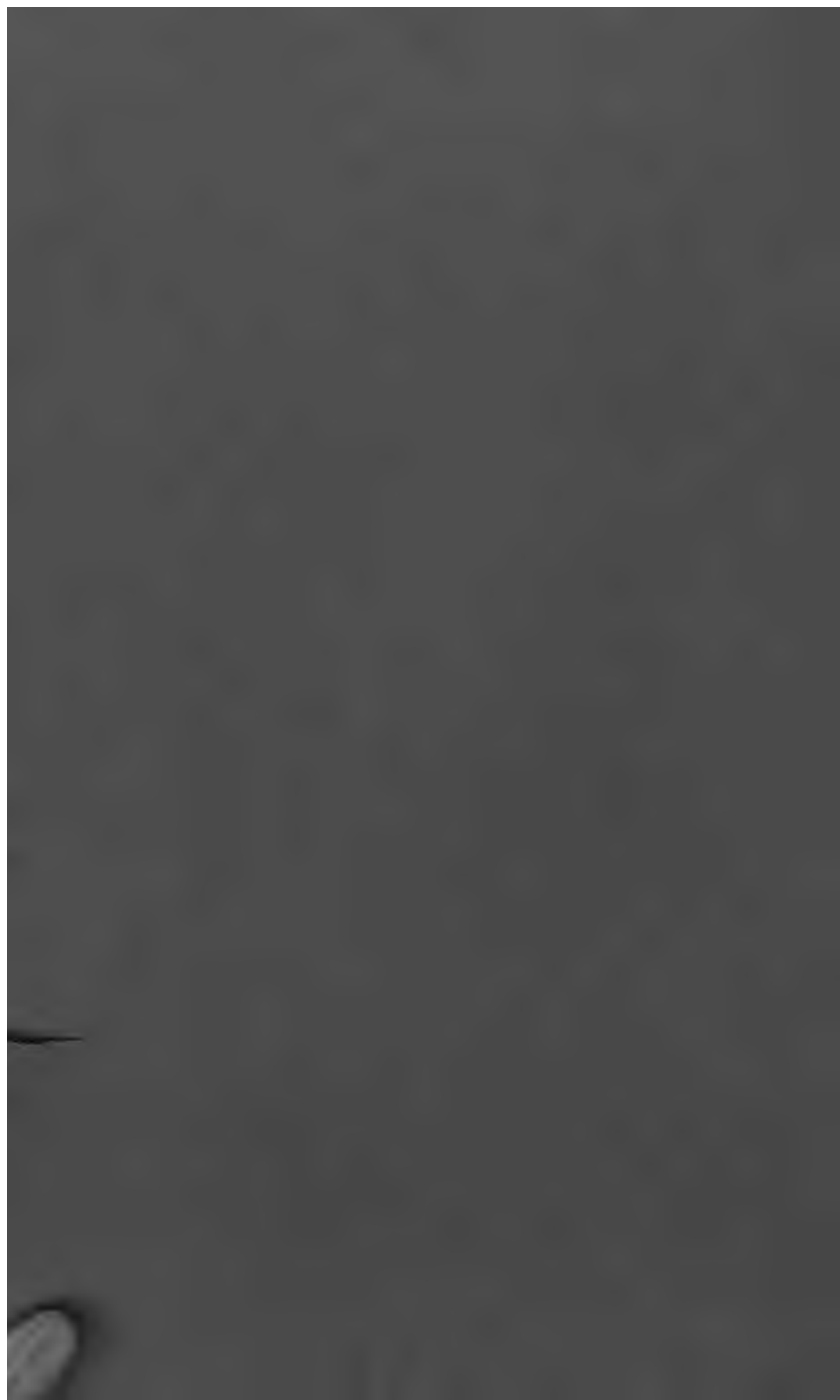
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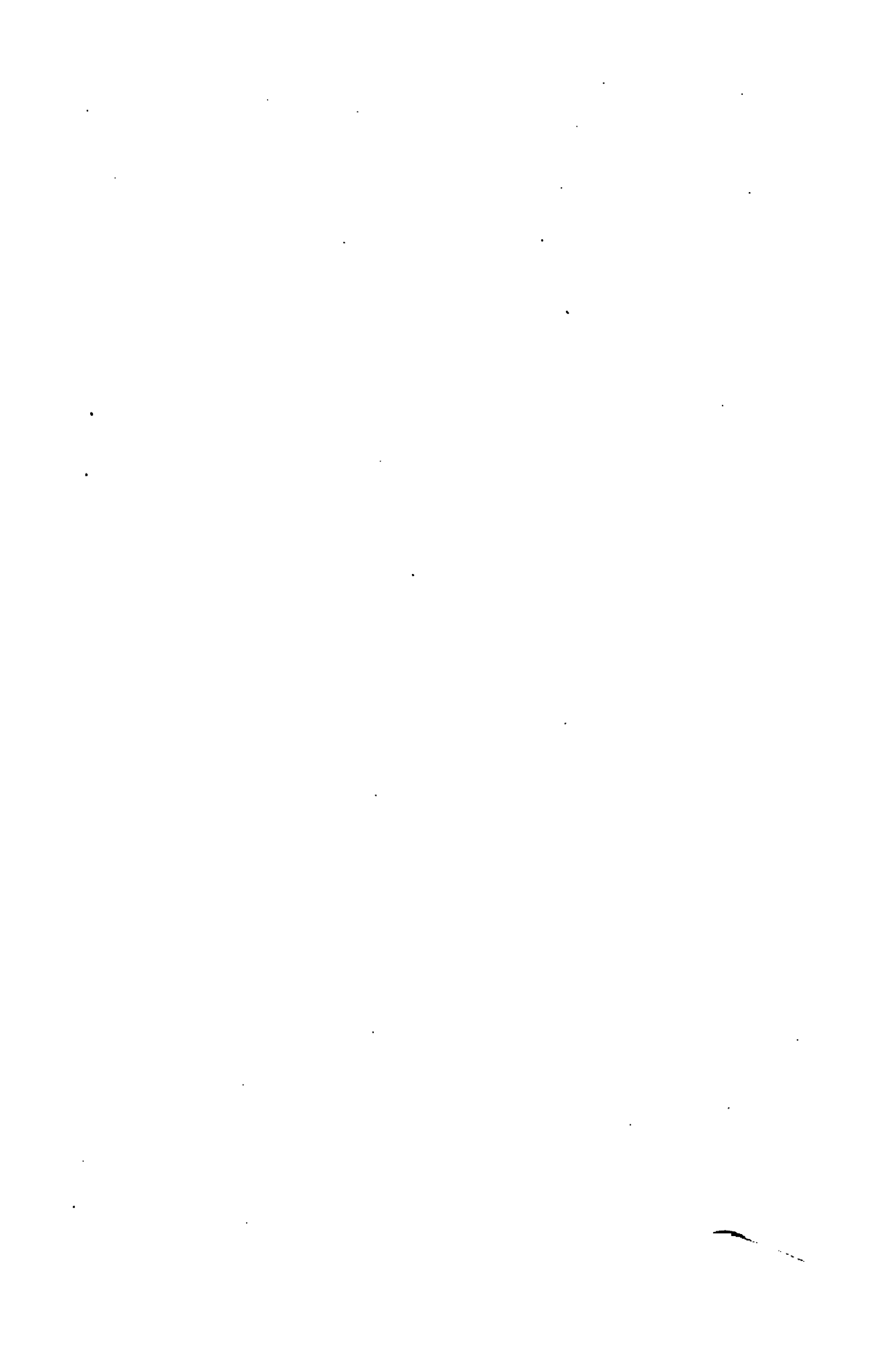
Stephen Hosmer  
Ichabod Wells















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